



Mimulus Memo

California Native Plant Society — Kern County Chapter
October-November 2007

President's Message

CNPS activities are underway again, after our quiet summer. We enjoyed our gardening talk in September by Alrie Middlebrook, with several members very inspired by her book and foundation's work. In October, we experimented with Linda Cooley's idea of complementing our social time with refreshments and music corresponding with our program topics, which has been fun brainstorming!

I hope each of you will join us at the **plant sale on November 3rd**, to shop and help, and at our **annual potluck in December**. Please read the information in this issue of the Mimulus Memo. These two events are our best opportunity of chatting and getting to know each other, as well as learning about California native plants.

Debby Kroeger, our VP, accompanied me to Santa Cruz for the Chapter Council Meeting in September. Besides getting to enjoy her company, it was great to have another person there to absorb the wealth of information we were presented at the Conservation Conference all day Saturday.

We heard presentations from groups trying to preserve the Santa Cruz Sandhills and our local Tejon Ranch. More about this later! We were very interested in a presentation on planting natives and genetic pollution, especially in restoration work and on edges of wildlands. It appears that CNPS is moving toward each chapter growing from local seed, the plants to be sold at their plant sales. Many chapters already do this, we found. Our chapter needs real gardening mavens to step forward and let us know that you would be interested in helping us start a nursery for growing local stock. We are lucky in having such a range of habitats located in our chapter boundaries, as we could grow so many

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OCTOBER MEETING IS THE BEES KNEES

(Membership meetings are held on the third Tuesday of the month, and the public is welcome)

Our October Chapter meeting started off with a buzz! We enjoyed music with a bee theme and ate honey-cookies and bee-shaped sugar cookies with cups of tea. We started the meeting with business, lead by Lucy. Then member Denis Kearns started his talk about Bees, to a packed room of 25 interested members and guests. We learned that bees can be social or solitary; they are "vegetarian wasps" and there are 1500-2000 species in California. Bees are so cool that many other insects mimic them. You can recognize a "real" bee by their branched hairs and 5 eyes (2 in the normal place and 3 little ones in the middle of the forehead). And, they also have complex tongues used for collecting pollen and nectar. Denis lauded the female bees for their hard work in the hives, while scorning the male bees for their "couch-potato" habits. But what can you expect from a haploid entity?? All they want to do is eat and make babies. The female bees have to do all the work of caring for the young, collecting the food and maintaining the colony.

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APES AT SAND RIDGE? see page 3

NATIVE PLANT SALE NOVEMBER 3RD AT CSUB! EVERYONE COME AND BRING A FRIEND see page 3

President's Message (continued from page 1)

different things!

An interesting presentation followed on chaparral fire research/management, as carried out in various part of the state. Some local governments are interpreting the new fire clearance regs in ways harmful to native plants. For instance, Los Angeles has decided that native plants are de facto hazards because they are native. Some counties recommend planting invasive plants as fire protection!

More interesting research on chaparral shows that fires in this habitat are not based on the age of the stand, but on the combination of low moisture content of the plants combined with Santa Ana winds. It has also been determined that the house fires in chaparral are in the main caused by airborne burning embers, rather than by the fire itself. It was a fairly chilling reminder that any opening can be invaded by a flying ember, even through the opening under a red roofing tile, or attic vent!

If you have time and interest in attending any of the always stimulating Chapter Council Meetings, please let me know. They are usually held the first weekends of March, June, September, and December in various areas of our state.

Happy Planting! — **Lucy Clark**



OCTOBER MEETING IS THE BEES KNEES (continued from page 1)

If you want to attract native bees, a good plant to have in your garden is *Phacelia*, which attracts more species of bees than any other flower. Other good bee plants are *Eremalche*, Yellow Star Thistle (DO NOT plant this invasive thistle -- maybe you can try a different thistle!), and any Asteraceae members (Daisies and the like),

Denis finished up the talk by highlighting several species of bees that are important for pollinating crops. These include native Squash bees, Blue Orchard bees (used for pollination of almonds and alfalfa), honeybees (not native), and Bumblebees.

The grand finale was a photo of a poster for a sci-fi movie which pictured a large insect (ostensibly a bee) attacking a scantily clad woman. Due to Denis's fine presentation, we were all able to point out why this wasn't a bee, after all.

For more information on what you can plant in your garden to attract bees see this website:

<http://nature.berkeley.edu/urbanbeegardens/>

There are lots of good plants listed here (<http://nature.berkeley.edu/urbanbeegardens/list.html>), too many to put them all in the newsletter....for instance:

Arctostaphylos
Achillea millefolium
Berberis spp
Ceanothus
Cercis occidentalis
Clarkia unguiculata

Eriogonum spp.
Eschscholzia californica
Penstemon spp.
Phacelia tanacetifolia
Salvia mellifera

There is lots of other information on this site as well.

Annual Native Plant Sale.

Saturday, November 3rd, 9:00am – 3:00pm
at the Environmental Studies Area (ESA) on the CSUB campus

Notice the 2 changes: November (not October) and CSUB (not CALM).

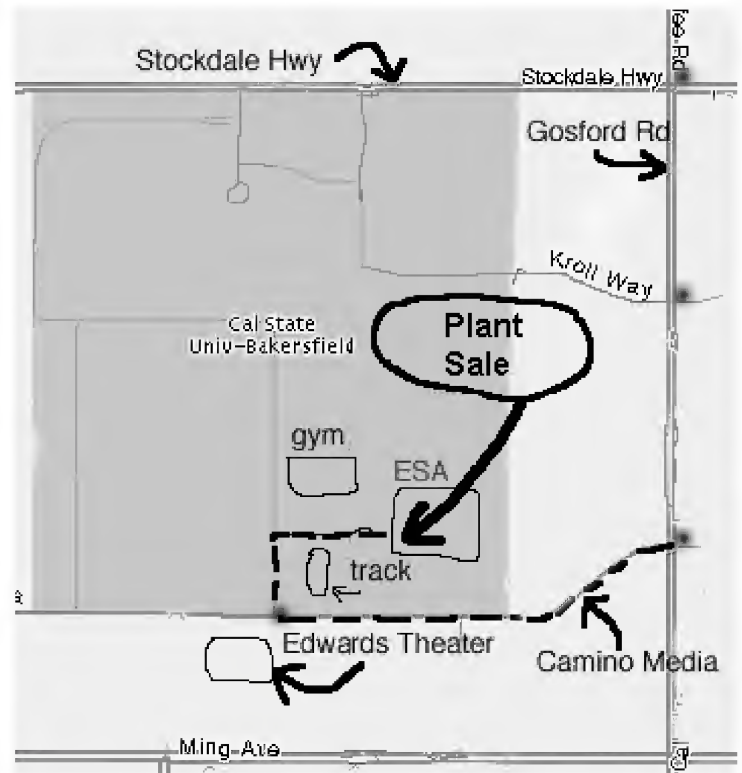
The BIG need we have this year is for volunteers with a truck or SUV that are willing to go to a nursery and pick up/ deliver the plants. If you have the vehicle & time, we will provide the nursery location, plant list and check! Please contact Debby (dekroeger@kern.org) even if you are just a teensy interested, so she can discuss it with you.

We need help setting up on Friday, Nov. 2nd.

We need volunteers throughout Nov 3rd, sale day.

This is our only fundraiser, so *YOUR* help is essential to our success.

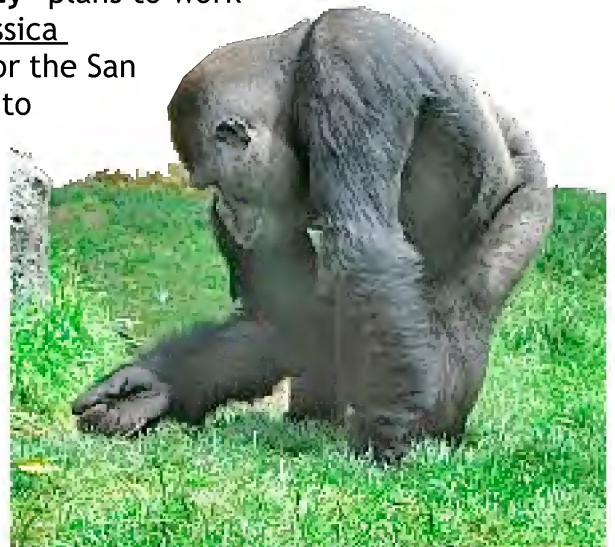
Mark your calendar, save the date, and plan to help.



Stewardship Or Prelude to Destruction!

The **Sand Ridge Preserve** is the location chosen by our Kern Chapter to carry out the stewardship activities of the APES. The **Alien Plant Eradication Society*** plans to work again this, our third year, to remove Sahara Mustard, Brassica tournefortii, which threatens to crowd out the, unusual for the San Joaquin Valley, desert plants growing there. Many thanks to **Lorraine Unger**, who has taken on the leadership job of checking on the appearance of the mustard, and turning us (with our plastic bags) out to the preserve to remove it before it goes to seed. In past years we have attacked several times during the growing period, which is every time it rains. Like a true weedy plant, it takes advantage of moisture when it arrives.

The Preserve is managed by the Center for Natural lands Management, which has a beautiful website at www.cnlm.org. Go to the home page, click on preserves, and then Sand Ridge to inspire yourself to join us!



Photograph by Gelina and Dave,
<http://www.ramblekatz.com>.

* APES is an official sub-group open to all members and their friends. A special invitation is offered to all with good mustard recipes!

YEARNING FOR SOMETHING IN THE FIGWORT FAMILY (SCROPHULARIACEAE) OTHER THAN THE COMMON ORNAMENTAL SNAPDRAGON???

YOU WILL LOVE THESE PENSTEMONS

These plants produce an abundance of brilliant purple/blue or red flowers.
Here are a few that might be available at the Native Plant Sale at FACT November 3, 2007.



Penstemon heterophyllus "Margarita BOP" – Foothill Penstemon

- * Excellent low growing
- * Full to part sun
- * Sandy or rocky soil
- * Evergreen herbaceous perennial
- * This selection is somewhat larger than general species and accepts garden care



Penstemon laetus – Mountain blue penstemon

- * Sun and light shade
- * Grows naturally in desert scrub or coniferous forest
- * Evergreen herbaceous perennial
- * 2 feet tall
- * Spring to summer growth period



Penstemon spectabilis – Showy penstemon

- * Evergreen herbaceous perennial
- * 3-6 feet tall when in bloom
- * Blue, pink, lilac, lavender-purple, violet, or white flowers
- * Blooms spring to fall
- * Sun tolerant
- * Drought tolerant to occasional



Penstemon centranthifolius – Scarlet Bugler

- * Evergreen herbaceous perennial
- * 2-5 feet tall when in bloom
- * Red flowers in April-July heavily used by hummingbirds
- * Full sun and very drought and cold tolerant
- * Excellent in rock gardens
- * Needs near perfect drainage with very little organic matter

Submitted by Don & Yvonne Turkal



The *Mimulus Memo* will now be printed every two months. This means more up-to-date information in each issue. It also means that we will need more things to print! If you come across anything of interest to our club please feel free to send it to Linda or myself. Perhaps you would like to report on a rare plant sighting or have a nice photograph. Don't be shy — Stephen Cooley

contact: Linda Cooley X7487linda@gmail.com
Stephen Cooley MimulusMemo@bak.rr.com

COMING EVENTS!

Saturday, November 3rd - Annual Native Plant Sale (see page 3)

Saturday, December 1st - Annual Member Potluck

1pm at Eva and Gordon Nipp's home, (south of Hwy 178, just west of the mouth of Kern Canyon). Those of you from outlying areas, start planning your carpools now!

This is our annual get-together held to socialize and dine together on the delicious food we bring to share. Everyone welcome, and bring your friends!

Dr. David Schale will speak about the planting and evolution of Ruth's and his garden in east Bakersfield, with photos. For those of you who attended our Native Garden Tour several years ago, you know what a treat this garden is! This will get us all outside and gardening ASAP!

January 15th — Ileene Anderson, The Tejon Ranch and Native Plant Preservation

February 19th — Linda Cooley, An Earthwatch Adventure in a Puerto Rican Forest

March 18th — Stephen Cooley, Native Plant Propagation

April 15th — David Schwartz, Xeric Ferns of Kern County and the World

OTHER EVENTS OF INTEREST

WINDWOLVES — Future volunteer events are on the following dates:

Nov 17th, Dec 15th, Jan 19th, Feb 23rd, Mar 15th, Apr 19th, May 17th

We look forward to seeing you here! David Clendenen, Wind Wolves Preserve Manager
(661) 858-1115 = Office (661) 747-0374 = Cell (661) 858-4505 = Fax

SIERRA CLUB —

The Kern-Kaweah Chapter of the Sierra Club and others are presenting James Kunstler, noted urban planner, opponent of sprawl, and author of The Geography of Nowhere and Home from Nowhere on Wednesday, November the 14th, at CSUB. This event will be held at the Icardo Center on campus (with free parking next to it.), from 7 to 8:30 pm.

Mr. Kunstler also authored The Latest Emergency: Surviving the End of the Oil Age, Climate Change, and Other Converging Catastrophes of the Twenty-First Century. This is an extraordinary opportunity to learn about these topics, so we can speak up in defense of open space in our county. Many thanks to Gordon Nipp, a CNPS member, as well as an activist of the Sierra Club, for bringing James Kunstler to Bakersfield!

FIELDTRIPS

If you have always wanted to visit a certain area in or out of Kern County (not too far out, of course) then please contact the Wild Flower Walk Chairmen, Don & Vonnie Turkal. If two heads are better than one, think what can be accomplished with 3, 4, or 5 heads.....the possibilities are limitless! email:tloveanimals@bak.rr.com

THANK YOU!

Calling Members — Harriet Morris
Hospitality — Debby Kroeger, Lucy Clark,
Linda Cooley
Publicity — Debby Kroeger
NEW WEBSITE! — Stephen Cooley
Education Table at Turkey Vulture Fest —
Marya Miller, Lucy Clark
October Program — Denis Kearns



Check Out Our Website at:
www.KernCNPS.org!

We now have an official website. Please go and see what you think. I am sure there are some things that could be done better and I need you to help me. Take a look, if you see an error or an out-of-date item, let me know. If you have an idea for a page, let me know.

I also need **PHOTOGRAPHS** for a "Photos by our Members" webpage.

Please send your photos to:
MimulusMemo@bak.rr.com

CNPS – Kern County Chapter

% Stephen Cooley, Editor

MimulusMemo@bak.rr.com

The mission of the California Native Plant Society is to increase understanding and appreciation of California's native plants and to conserve them and their natural habitats through science, education, advocacy, horticulture and land stewardship.